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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.		
10/790,118	03/02/2004	Minoru Urabe	1614.1391	1154		
21171	7590	08/07/2008	EXAMINER			
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005				MIRZA, ADNAN M		
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER				
2145						
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/790,118	URABE, MINORU	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	ADNAN M. MIRZA	2145	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05/13/2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-2,5-9,12-20,23-29,32-33 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,2,5-9,12-20,23-29,32 and 33 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1,8,15,19,24,28 recites the limitation "available at the same time" in independent claims 1,8,15,19,24,28. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-2,5-9,12-20,23-29,32-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oe (U.S. 2006/0041614) and further in view of Mitsuoka et al (U.S. 2003/0154281).

As per claims 1,8,15,19,24,28 Oe disclosed an information processing method for sharing storage areas of respective storage apparatuses of a plurality of servers connected to a communication network there among, comprising the steps of: a) registering the storage areas of the respective storage apparatus of the plurality of servers in a management server; b) managing collectively in said management server the respective storage areas of the storage apparatuses of

the respective servers thus registered using different storage area usage ways including at least one of the single usage way, an integrated usage way a multiplicate usage way and a divided usage way available at the same time (Page. 4, Paragraph. 0057); c) requesting allocation of the storage area of the storage apparatus thus managed; d) the management server allocating a predetermined one of the storage areas of the storage apparatuses collectively managed in response to the allocation request (Page. 2, Paragraph. 0017); e) requesting the management server to mount the storage area of the storage apparatus thus allocated; f) the management server mounting the storage area of the storage apparatus allocated in said step d) in response to the mounting request, and transmitting mounting information which indicates this matter as a response (Page. 2, Paragraph. 0101);

However Oe did not disclose in detail g) requesting the server, to which said storage area thus mounted belongs, to access said storage area, according to said mounting information thus transmitted; and h) said server which thus receives the access request accessing the storage area of its own, and transmitting an accessing result as a response.

In the same field of endeavor Mitsuoka disclosed, “A storage system employs an interface controller that uses a block storage protocol via a network, and comprises means to switch interfaces. Accordingly, it is possible to confirm to accesses according to both normal network interface and block-storage interface. Further, since management information is managed in a centralized manner and since means for providing mutual reference and update is employed, it is possibly to carry management form both interfaces with no difference. By enabling handling of

logically different interfaces over a physically same medium, such as the equipment network costs in view of system equipment can be reduced. Further by integrating the storage management interface, management costs can also be reduced. By unifying the connection manner of the storage system by means of storage-access interface and the management interface, cost reduction in connection devices and improvement in connectivity with applications can be realized (Page. 4, Paragraph. 0072-0073)”

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have incorporated a storage system employs an interface controller that uses a block storage protocol via a network, and comprises means to switch interfaces. Accordingly, it is possible to confirm to accesses according to both normal network interface and block-storage interface. Further, since management information is managed in a centralized manner and since means for providing mutual reference and update is employed, it is possibly to carry management form both interfaces with no difference. By enabling handling of logically different interfaces over a physically same medium, such as the equipment network costs in view of system equipment can be reduced. Further by integrating the storage management interface, management costs can also be reduced. By unifying the connection manner of the storage system by means of storage-access interface and the management interface, cost reduction in connection devices and improvement in connectivity with applications can be realized as taught by Mitsuoka in the method and system of OE to carry the management and maintenance of the host computer can be carried out easily.

3. As per claims 2,9,16,20,25,29 Oe-Mitsuoka disclosed further comprising the steps of: i) requesting said management server to unmount the storage area once mounted in said step 1 f); and j) said management server unmounting said storage area in response to the unmounting request made in said step i) (Mitsuoka, Page. 4, Paragraph. 0052).
4. As per claims 5,12,23,32 Oe-Mitsuoka disclosed wherein: the collective management of the registered storage areas of the storage apparatuses in said management server is performed in said step b) in such a manner that the storage areas are managed as virtual storage areas logically (Mitsuoka, Page. 5, Paragraph. 0067).
5. As per claims 6,13,17,26 Oe-Mitsuoka disclosed wherein: the accessing operation in said step h) comprises at least an initialization operation, information writing operation, information reading operation, an information searching operation and an information deleting operation. (Mitsuoka, Page. 5, Paragraph. 0075)
6. As per claims 7,14,18,27 Oe-Mitsuoka disclosed wherein: said plurality of servers and respective storage apparatuses comprise direct attached storages respectively (Mitsuoka, Page. 5, Paragraph. 0077).

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 05/13/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Response to applicants argument are as follows.

A. Applicant argued that prior art did not disclose, "registering a plurality of storage usage ways related to storage areas of respective servers in a management table of the management server; and managing the storage areas of respective servers using the registered plurality of storage areas of respective servers using the registered plurality of storage usage ways to share the storage areas among the respective servers".

As to applicant argument Oe disclosed, "Each interface card includes a target channel adapter (TCA) functioning as a network controller, conversion and management part carrying out protocol conversion processing and disk area management processing and SCSI having a function of a disk controller. The conversion management part interprets a message received from the control apparatus (Page. 4, Paragraph. 0055). Where Mitsuoka disclosed, "management interface in the out-of-band mode, configuration information of storage system can be accessed via an SNMP service and/or JAVA RMI server incorporated as an OS application when accessed from the management terminal (Page. 3, Paragraph. 0042).

B. Applicant argued that Oe did not disclose the "collectively managing the respective storage area using different storage usage ways".

As to applicants interpretation of the claim 1 the Prior art OE disclosed the present invention carries out management as to which data is stored in which location in the storage apparatus and also in, in some case, in the cache apparatus, and also in some case, in the cache apparatus in principle (Page. 2, Paragraph. 0019).

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to Adnan Mirza whose telephone number is (571)-272-3885.
9. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday during normal business hours. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jason Cardone can be reached on (571)-272-3933. The fax for this group is (703)-746-7239. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.
10. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for un published

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866)-217-9197 (toll-free).

Adnan Mirza
/A. M. M./
Examiner, Art Unit 2145

/Jason D Cardone/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2145